The Second Hand of Time

VOL. 4

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SOMEONE IS HERE ...

OH,
IT'S YOU.
I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU.
SO, YOU WERE HERE ...

JUST NOW ... SOMEONE WAS ...
WHAT'S WRONG?
NO ...
NEVER MIND ...

EVEN THOUGH IT IS PURELY WHITE ...
WHY ...
WHY AREN'T THE SHADOWS IN THE SNOW BLUE?
REMEM-BERING SOME-THING LIKE THAT?
WHA-?
WHY WAS I ...
I ...

EVERY-
THING
EXCEPT
FOR ME
...
FORGET
...
FORGET
...
EVERY-
THING.

*KYAAA!
NO! WHAT THE HECK IS THIS?! WHY ARE WE FALLING?!
I'M NOT LETTING YOU FALL IF YOU HOLD ON THAT TIGHTLY.
HUH ?
BUT I ...
DON'T MIND THIS AT ALL.

!?
LE... LET GO OF ME!!
OUCH!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!
LET... LET GO OF ME!!
NO!!
KEEP THAT UP AND WE MIGHT FA...
KYAA!
UWAH!

THINK OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DID THAT...
REALLY ...
HOW ELSE AM I GOING TO HOLD YOU?
PERVERT!
SO I'M A PERVERT NOW?!
HOW ELSE WAS I SUPPOSED TO REACT WHEN YOU WERE GROPING ME LIKE THAT?!?
WAIT ...
THE SNOW WON'T DO US ANY GOOD IF WE'RE THIS HIGH UP.
I'M OKAY SO YOU CAN LET ME GO!!
LET YOU..? OI!!
RI-RIKU !!

THIS IS ...
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON HERE?
OU- OUCH!!
... WHERE AM I?
EH?
WHAT'S THIS VOICE COMING FROM UNDER ME?
THEN, YOU COULD GET OFF NOW.
YOU OKAY?
UN.
... THE SNOW.
IT'S REALLY COLD, YOU KNOW ...

*DUNNO WHAT THIS MEANS. BUT I THINK IT MIGHT MEAN "HIGH KING OF EVIL"?
I WAS LUCKY ...
I DON'T REALLY MIND.
MY HEART IS BEATING FAST BUT I DIDN'T CHANGE TO DAISUKE...
SO... I'M SO SORRY...
*KYAAAH!
I WAS SITTING ON TOP OF YOU?!?
HIS HAND ... IS HURT ...?
... AH ...

IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL. IT'S ONLY A SCRATCH ...
NO WAY !!

HEY ... YOUR HAND ...
BY ANY CHANCE, WAS IT FROM THE TREE?
?
OH.

?

WHAT?

IT MIGHT GET INFECTED. I DON'T WANT IT TO BE MY FAULT IT MIGHT GET WORSE.

WHAT IS IT!?

HEH

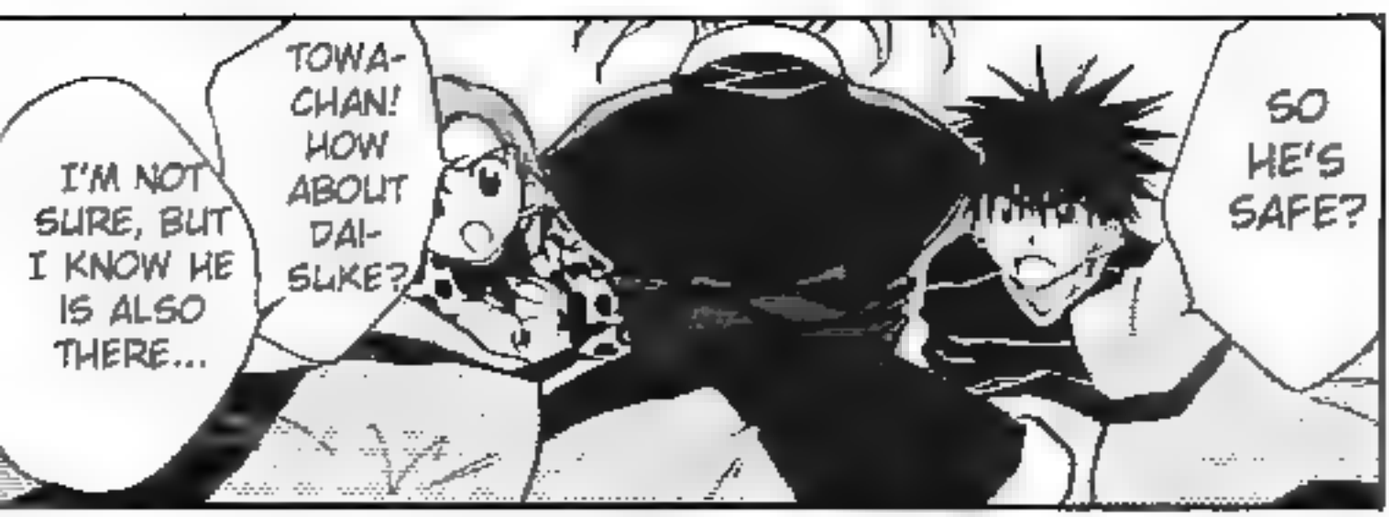
YOU WERE ...

ACTUALLY WORRIED ABOUT ME, WEREN'T YOU?

WHA-!!
ABSOLUTELY NO WAY!!
I JUST DON'T WANT IT TO GET WORSE!!
WHO THE HELL IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD DO THAT?
DON'T LET IT GET TO YOUR HEAD BECAUSE OF THIS!!
AND BESIDES ...
WHAT IS THIS PLACE!!
HOW DID I GET FROM MY ROOM TO THIS SNOW-COVERED PLACE!?
IT'S A "DREAM-WORLD."
WELL, IT IS.. FOR HUMANS ANYWAY.
A SORT OF REALITY ...
BUT YOU COULD SAY THIS WORLD IS NOT REALLY REAL ...

AND THE SNOW...
IS NOT COLD AT ALL ...
A REALITY ...
A WORLD THAT IS NOT REAL?
BESIDES ...
I'M STUCK HERE WITH THIS BASTARD ...!!
!
COME TO THINK OF IT ...
IT'S NOT TRULY COLD HERE DESPITE THE SNOW ...
THIS HAS GOT TO BE A BAD DREAM!!
A NIGHT-MARE! A NIGHT-MARE!

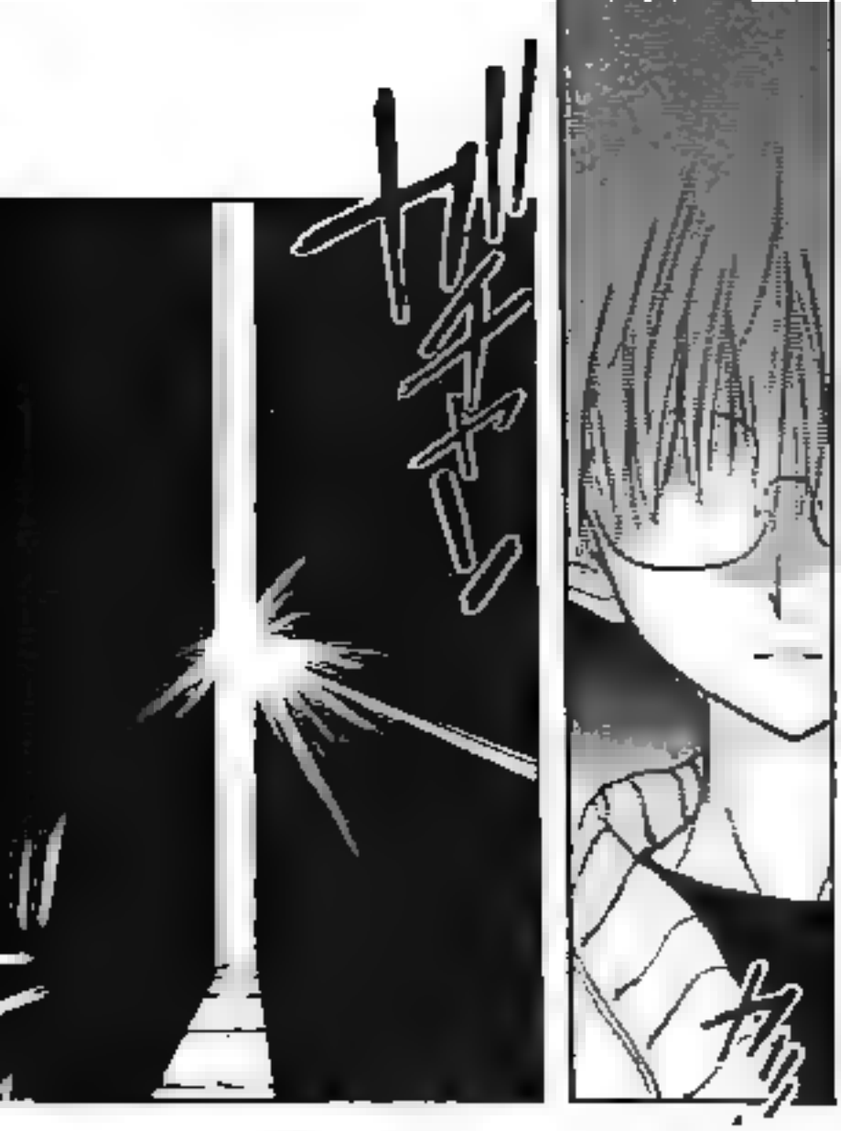
RIKU !!
.....
ENTERED THE WORLD OF THE "SECOND HAND OF TIME."
DARK HAS ...


I'M NOT SURE, BUT I KNOW HE IS ALSO THERE...
TOWA-CHAN! HOW ABOUT DAI-SUKE?
SO HE'S SAFE?

EEH ?!
WHAT'S WRONG?
WHAT IS IT?
IT SEEMS LIKE THE WELCOMING PARTY IS HERE.
AND ...
THE HU-MAN ...
NAMED RIKU IS ALSO TOGETHER WITH HIM, INSIDE ...

.....!
WEL-
COME
?
WHAT
ON
EARTH
IS THIS
??

KYAA!!



"THIS" IS ...
THE BEGINNING OF THE NEVER-ENDING NIGHT-MARE.

"BLACK WINGS."

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?
EVEN IF THIS IS A DREAM, BUT WHY DO I HAVE TO BE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
WHAT IS YOUR WORTH OF BEING A PHANTOM THIEF IF YOU CAN'T EVEN FIGHT OFF THOSE GUYS?
OKAY. WE SURRENDER
*GIVING UP WITHOUT A FIGHT.

DON'T YOU HAVE ANY PRIDE AS A PHANTOM THIEF?

BOTH OUR ARMS AND LEGS ARE TIED UP AND ...

NEVER MIND BEING A THIEF, YOU'RE A FAILURE AS A MAN.

YOU DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO FIGHT THEM OFF!!

なんだよ ないっ!!

FIGHT THEM OFF ...

WHY YOU

"

WHEN DID YOU

AH .....

IT'S FASTER TO BE CAUGHT ANYWAY, BECAUSE ..

I "WANTED TO COME HERE."

EXCUSE ME?

WHAT ABOUT BEING A PHANTOM THIEF?

I JUST CAN'T TAKE YOU WITH ME WHILE I STAKE THE PLACE OUT.
THE POINT BEING WE'RE IN HERE SAFELY.
I AM FAMIL-IAR WITH "THIS WORLD" SO I COULD MOVE AROUND FREELY.
BUT YOU CAN'T.
NOW THEN, THE SECU-RITY IS KINDA LACKING SO
I'LL FIN SH THE JOB I CAME HERE FOR.
"JOB?"
WAI-WAIT A MINUTE ...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WHAT-EVER HAPPENS
YOU CAN CALL FOR ME, OR FOR DAISUKE
WHOEVER YOU LIKE, ANYWAY.

WHO-
WHO-
EVER!
-IKE?
WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN BY
THAT?
AH
AH
...!
YOU
COULD
HAVE
AT
LEAST
UNTIED
ME
FIRST!!

SO THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE MAKING?
FOR THIS WORLD ?
!
NOW YOU'RE STUCK HERE.
WITHOUT ME, YOU'RE PRETTY MUCH A NORMAL HUMAN BEING.

IT'S TIME TO BRING YOU BACK.

DAI-SUKE.

...

"YOU."

WHA- WHAT'S WRONG? KOSUKE-SAN?
I FOUND THIS IN MY RE-SEARCH.
FIRSTLY, I DIS-COVERED SOME DISCRE-PANCIES.
I LOOKED FOR SOME HINTS IN THE DOCU-MENTS.
WE KNOW THE "SECOND HAND OF TIME" APPEARS IN "ICE AND DARK", RIGHT?
IT SEEMS LIKE ALL THE EDI-TIONS WERE PUBLISHED AFTER THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION.
LOOK HERE ...
AND HERE AS WELL ...
WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN ...?

HAS AN UN-KNOWN SIDE TO IT.
A SIDE THAT IS SHROUDED BY THE DARKNESS.
AND THE PROBLEM WAS THE STORY ITSELF.
IT WAS ACTUALLY WRITTEN "BEFORE" THE CULTURAL REVO-LUTION. AND THERE SEEMED TO BE A SORT OF "PROBLEM" WITH IT, THAT'S WHY THE COPIES WERE DESTROYED.
THE STORY ITSELF WASN'T WRITTEN AFTER THE CULTURAL REVOLU-TION.
AND SO, IN OTHER WORDS, THE STORY "ICE AND SNOW" ...

THE TRUTH
.....
WHO ... ARE YOU?
OF THE STORY
.....